the facts ABOUT THE PALESTINE PROBLEM

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I - THE BACKGROUND

A - Statements by Zionists

(1) In his book «Trial & Error», Chaim Weizmann said : «Should Palestine fall within the British sphere of influence, and should Britain encourage a Jewish settlement there, as a British dependency, we could have in twenty to thirty years a million Jews and perhaps more; they would develop the country, bring back civilization to it and form a very effective guard for the Suez Canal ».

(*Chaim Weizmann*, Trial & Error, *P. 191*)

(2) In 1919, Dr. Weizmann's intentions towards the Lebanon were made plain in the following statement : «We travelled fairly extensively, crossing the Syrian border into Lebanon, and stopping off at some of the outpost settlements. Every hill and every rock stood out like a challenge to me at this time, telling me at every turn of the road how much planning and energy and money would have to be poured into this country before it could be ready to absorb large numbers of people».

(Trial & Error, *P. 313*)

Editor's note :

This is not a magazine, nor even a newsletter. No attempt will be made at long-winded analysis or description. It is literally a «factual» sheet.

FACTS will try to present the facts of the Palestine Problem. We think these will speak for themselves and need no comment or elaboration. It is this ignorance of the facts by the outside world that has been responsible for much of the human suffering that has taken place in Palestine. It is time that the facts were known. Only on their basis can disinterested and fair-minded people reach objective and intelligent conclusions. To help such people is our objective.

FACTS is produced by the Arab Women's Information Committee, a voluntary, non-professional, non-profit and private organization of Arab women living in Beirut, Lebanon, who have been appalled at the manner in which the Palestine Problem has so far been presented in the English-speaking press.

FACTS will be divided into two sections, the first dealing with background material, the second with current developments. It will appear on a monthly basis. We also hope to be able to publish supplements on specific issues as the occasion arises.

The background section will comprise quotations from Zionist writings to illustrate Zionist ideological and strategic thought, statistics pertaining to various aspects of the Palestine Problem, and summaries of the more important historical events and developments of the problem.

The selection of this material is necessarily arbitrary, but it is hoped that as much ground can be covered in successive issues of **FACTS** as space permits.

As to the section on current developments, it will focus attention on the developments that have taken place since 5 June 1967.

We shall endeavour throughout to give detailed references for all the material that we publish. We hope that our efforts will contribute, however modestly, to a better understanding of the Arab point of view on the Palestine Problem.

FACTS welcomes all comments, suggestions and inquiries by its readers.

(3) Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, does not consider Israel as a part of the Middle East : « The State of Israel is a part of the Middle East only in geography.. from the decisive standpoint of dynamism, creation and growth, Israel is a part of World Jewry».

(*Ben Gurion*, Rebirth and Destiny, *P. 489*)

(4) In 1952, Moshe Dayan, the present Defense Minister of Israel, declared : « It lies upon the people's shoulders to prepare for the war, but it lies upon the Israeli army to carry out the fight with the ultimate object of erecting the Israeli Empire ».

(*From a statement broadcast on the Arabic program*, Radio Israel, *12 February 1952*)

(5) In 1956, a spokesman for the extreme right-wing Israeli Herut Party declared : « Israel should take the offensive and capture strategic points along its border, including the Gaza strip, and then should take over the British backed Kingdom of Jordan».

(The New York Times, *25 January 1956*)

B - Historical Events

(1) In 1903, the British Government offered the Sixth Zionist Congress the territory of Uganda for the establishment of a Jewish National Home. This was accepted by 295 against 175 votes.

(*Weizmann*, Trial & Error, *P. 115*)

Among the arguments put forward against this scheme was the fact that « the *few white settlers,* mostly English, who were already in Uganda, would fight against a Jewish influx into their territory, which could not accomodate more than a very limited number ».

(*Weizmann*, Trial & Error, P. 118)

(2) The Israeli Delegation to the United Nations presented to the Palestine Conciliation Commission appointed by the United Nations on December 1948, a plan according to which the *international boundaries of Mandatory Palestine* would be considered the boundaries of the State of Israel.

(*United Nations documents A/927, 21 June 1949*)

(3) In 1948 Jordan proposed to the Special Committee supervising the Armistice :

a — Access of Israel to the Wailing Wall, Mount Scopus, the Mount of Olives and Latrun — Jerusalem Rd.

b — Access of Jordanians to Jaffa, Nazareth and Gaza.

These proposals were described by the Israelis as «fantastic.»

(*Sami Hadawi*, Bitter Harvest, P. 140).

(4) On 10 March 1949, while the ink was still wet on the Israeli-Egyptian Armistice Agreement signed on 2 March 1949, an Israeli motorized force advanced across the Negev and occupied Umm Reshrash on the Gulf of Aqaba. Thus, what later became the Israeli port of Eilath, for which the Israelis ostensibly fought the June War in 1967, was actually captured by the Israelis *after* the signing of the Armistice Agreements.

(Keesing's Archives, *Vol. VII 1948 — 50, P. 9650*)

(5) In 1949 Israel was admitted to U.N. membership *on condition* it accepted « to repatriate and compensate » the Palestinian Arab Refugees.

(U. N. Resolution *273, 11 May 1949*)

(6) Dag Hammarskjold, in reference to the question of Israel's right to free passage through the Suez Canal, said : « The issue has important legal aspects which may be considered as meriting further clarification, but it is also part of the general Palestine problem ».

(*U.N. Secretary-General's Report for 1958 — 1959, P. 5*)

C - Statistics (background)

(1) The number of villages in the Jewish and Arab States (according to the U.N. Partition Plan of 1947) was distributed as follows :

Jewish State		Arab State	
Arab	Jewish	Arab	Jewish
272	183	552	22

(*Moshe Menuhin*, Decadence of Judaism in Our Time, *P. 239*)

(2) In the year 1944 — 1945,

The Arabs in Palestine were producing :		The Jews were producing :
Grains :	193,376 tons	16,579
Vegetables :	189,104 tons	55,730
Fruits :	73,320 tons	21,398
Olives :	78,287 tons	1,182
Melons :	135,634 tons	7,193

(*Table 4, Chapter IX, P. 323*, Survey of Palestine, *Government of Palestine; 1946*)

(3) The defense expenditure of Israel for the year 1966 — 1967 was 447 million dollars. The defense expenditure of Egypt for the same year was 494 million dollars. Per capita, the defense expenditure of Israel is $169, Egypt $16, Israel's being the second highest in the world, after the U.S. and before the Soviet Union.

(The Military Balance, *Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1967 — 1968*)

II - RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

A - Statements by Zionists

(1) After the occupation of the West Bank of the Jordan by Israel, Levi Eskol, the Prime Minister of Israel, was questioned by the German weekly *Der Spiegel* concerning the future of Transjordan. When asked, «How will Transjordan live now?» he dismissed the question by saying : « It would exploit its own resources ».

(*Interview with* Der Spiegel, *reported by* Le Monde, *11 July 1967*)

(2) Abba Eban, Foreign Minister of Israel says :
« Withdrawal will not bring peace ... but ... we want a State that will remain overwhelmingly Jewish in character, composition, society, culture and spirit ».

(*From a statement to the* Jerusalem Post, *28 January 1968, P. 8, Col. 4*)

(3) At the first meeting of the «Movement for a Greater Israel» which opposes the restitution of Arab territories occupied in June 1967, and which is supported by such members of the Israeli Government as Menachim Begin, Yosef Sapir and Moshe Dayan, General Avraham Yoffe declared that : « King Hussein had no legal rights over the West Bank and we have nothing to discuss with him ».

(Le Monde, *20 December 1967, and 28 December 1967*)

(4) At this same meeting, attended by rabbis, intellectuals and university professors, the speakers declared themselves in favour of the accelerated colonization by Jews of the West Bank of the Jordan. Mrs. Rachel Ben-Zvi, wife of the ex-President of Israel, declared that Israel had not « occupied any territory not belonging to it, but had only taken back its lawful heritage ».

(Le Monde,*20 December 1967*)

(5) On 18 July 1967, in Paris, Mr. Walter Eytan, Israeli Ambassador to France, declared : « With the exception of the Sinai Desert, Israel had not taken anything that belonged to anybody else ».

(The Times, *27 July 1967*)

(6) Mr. Yigal Allon, Minister of Labour in Israel, announced that official maps of Greater Israel have been issued. He declared that « all the old maps of Israel which had the pre-June 5 Armistice lines, were only of historical value ».

(Le Monde, *23 February 1968*)

B - Other Statements

(1) On 5 August 1967, in an address to the « Commonwealth Club », Edward Teller, the well-known nuclear physicist, said he was convinced that Israel was working on the production of an atomic bomb. « This has put Israel in a difficult position, » he said, « I think the Israelis will never sign a non-proliferation treaty ».

(L'Orient, *6 August 1967, U.P.I.*)

(2) After a short visit to Israel, in a letter to *The Guardian* on 16 August 1967, Labour M.P. Hooley said : « During the ten days of intensive discussions that I have had with Israeli politicians and leaders, I found nothing but contempt for the United Nations ».

(L'Orient, *17 August 1967, Reuter*)

(3) On 10 August 1967, *L'Orient* published a letter by the well-known American sociologist and thinker, David Riesman, in which he said : « It is comforting to find people (like Eric Fromm) who have not joined the ranks of the admirers of Moshe Dayan. » And that people like I.F. Stone have spoken with dignity on the problem « although he has always had erroneous opinions, like the fact that Palestine should be considered the only refuge for the Jews ».

(ed : Eric Fromm, David Riesman and I.F. Stone are all well-known Jewish writers)

(4) On 24 August 1967, the Swiss *Journal de Geneve* said in an editorial entitled, « Israel exaggerates and isolates itself » : « As to the 200,000 new refugees in Jordan, it might have been written in the Bible that the chosen people will expel them, but it is written in history that all injustice asks for revenge ».

(L'Orient, *25 August 1967, A.F.P.*)

C - Statistics

(1) According to the Israeli Central Statistics Office, the number of Arabs living on the West Bank of the Jordan by the end of December 1967, was 600,000 people.

(L'Orient, *27 December 1967, A.F.P.*)

(2) In a book published by the Ministry of Information in Jordan, the number of Arabs living in the West Bank of the Jordan before the June was was 981,000 people.

(*N. Dajani*, The Israeli Aggression, *July 1967, Amman*)

(3) On 12 December 1967, Lawrence Michelmore, head of U.N.R.W.A., declared that the number of refugees from the West Bank of Jordan was 245,000.

(Hayat, *12 December 1967, Reuter, A.P.*)

Therefore, there should have been, by the end of December 1967, 736,000 Arabs living on the West Bank of the Jordan and not 600,000 as Israel claims.

(4) 1967 — 1968 being an exceptionally hard winter, at least « 53,000 people are currently shivering in the windswept tent camps set up by U.N.R.W.A. » in Jordan.

(Newsweek, *22 January 1968*)

D - Current Events

(1) On 14 July 1967, Secretary General U Thant reported that Israeli troops had mistreated officers of the U.N. Emergency Force and had looted their personal property and office equipment during the early days of the Middle East conflict.

At the Rafah U.N.E.F. camp, Mr. U Thant said, members of U.N. international and military staff were compelled by an Israeli officer to sleep on the ground all night without food or water, and « all of U.N. vehicles in running conditions had also been removed by Israeli forces and had been seen in use in the Gaza area ».

(N.Y. Herald Tribune, *15 — 16 July 1967*).

(2) On 9 February 1968 Israeli artillery shelled, for the second time in two months, the refugee camp of Al-Karamah (25,000 refugees) on the border of the Jordan river. U.N.R.W.A. offices, refugee huts and a boys' school were hit with 120 mortar shells, incendiary and high explosive bombs. 14 people were killed and 50 wounded, 4 of whom were women and 5 children.

(Al-Nahar, *10 February 1968, A.F.P.*)

(3) On 15 February 1968, Israeli planes attacked with napalm more than 15 villages and refugee camps along the Jordan river (Amongst them the refugee camp of Al-Karamah for the third time in two months).

(Le Jour, *Beirut, 16 February 1968, A.F.P.*)

The casualties of this attack were disclosed as follows a few days later : 46 civilians and 10 military killed, and 55 civilians and 27 military wounded.

(L'Orient, *18 February 1968, A.F.P.*)

Another casualty of this attack : 70,000 new refugees who fled the banks of the Jordan in panic towards Amman.

(L'Orient, *22 February 1968, A.F.P.*)

(4) After the recent visit of Premier Levi Eshkol of Israel to the U.S. : « A House Republican group charged that Prime Minister

Levi Eshkol of Israel was pressured into helping win votes for President Johnson among American Jews in exchange for the sale of 50 U.S. jet fighters to his country ».

(New York Herald Tribune, *20 — 21 January 1968*)

(5) In a recent article appearing in the French newspaper *Le Monde,* it was made clear that civilians in territories occupied by Israel were protected by the Geneva Conventions. The article said that : « Even if certain governments should denounce these conventions, individuals remain protected under their articles. »... and that « the perpetrators of these acts (reprisals against civilians) could be prosecuted regardless of whether they were carrying out orders given to them by their superiors or implementing injunctions from their governments ». The article summed up by saying that the situation will deteriorate very rapidly « as the first phase of an occupation is always the mildest ».

(Le Monde, *8 February 1968*)

(6) Michael Adams, the correspondent of the British daily newspaper *The Guardian,* after reporting on the repression and reprisals against civilians in Gaza, says : « When I asked Colonel Mart, (the Israeli Army Spokesman in Gaza) how he reconciled these acts with his government's signature on the Geneva Conventions, he showed interest. « What is this Convention ? » he asked, and when I explained that it outlawed collective punishment against civilians and the destruction of civilian property, even in time of war, he shrugged his shoulders. »... Michael Adams adds : « I had my ups and downs during four years as a prisoner of war in Germany, but the Germans never treated me as harshly as the Israelis are treating the Arabs of Gaza, the majority of whom are women and children. »

(The Guardian, *26 January 1968*)

(7) Although charges of collusion with Israel have always been denied, the U.S. Government was prepared for a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union rather than stop Israel from occupying the *whole* of the Sinai Peninsula in June 1967.

(Newsweek *magazine, 12 February 1968, P. 9*)

(8) On 8 December 1967, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (U.N.R.W.A.) officially protested to the Israeli Government on the systematic blowing up of refugee shelters by the Israeli Army.

(L'Orient, *9 December 1967, A.F.P.*)

(9) On 8 December 1967, 100 houses of a village in the Jericho area were destroyed by the Israeli Army. The villagers were forced to abandon their houses and cross the Jordan River to the East Bank. Methods used : the shooting of tens of innocent young people in front of the other villagers, the killing of parents in front of their children, the use of police dogs, etc...

(L'Orient, *9 December 1967, A.F.P. Reuter*)

« ...let the Arabs be encouraged to move out as the Jews move in. »

(The National Executive Committee of the British Labour Party, 1944)

« ISRAEL IS PROVING AT THIS VERY MOMENT ITS DESIRE FOR PEACE »

(Press statement by J. P. Sartre dated 5 June 1967, quoted in THE SIX DAY WAR, published by Arthaud)

« Why is it that one often encounters people whose judgement is basically sound, who are at the same time completely mistaken on important issues ? »

(Voltaire, DICTIONNAIRE PHILOSOPHIQUE)

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